

City of Newton
Crime Prevention Commission

(Alternatively referred to below as CPC or the Commission)

Draft Minutes of Meeting – Wednesday, May 21, 2014

7:00pm - Newton Police Headquarters, 1321 Washington Street, West Newton, MA 02465.

Active Commissioners Present: Frank Wolpe (Chair), Richard Catrambone, Debra Darcy, Bernie Goulding and Fred Winer

Commissioners' Consultants Present: Sami O'Reilly, Barbara Wong, Terry Sauro, Steven Hassan and Abby M. Wolpe

Special Guest: David Gotthelf, Ph.D., NCSP, Coordinator of Therapeutic Services, Newton Public Schools

Ex-Officio Member: NPD Lt. Bruce Apotheker Officer

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Frank Wolpe, Chair who welcomed all present. Minutes for prior meetings were approved, followed by the presentation of the Monthly Comstat Crime Report by Lt. Bruce Apotheker (Two-time, 2010 and 2011, Nominee for coveted Person of the Year Award of the – City of Newton / Human Rights Commission)

QPR training by *NewtonCares*, our City's suicide prevention coalition, was the featured event of the meeting. Our speaker was

David Gotthelf, Ph.D., NCSP
Coordinator of Therapeutic Services, Newton Public Schools



The Program covered:

SUICIDE PREVENTION AND QPR TRAINING

3 simple steps that anyone can learn to help save a life

QPR stands for Question, Persuade, and Refer -- 3 simple steps that anyone can learn to help save a life from suicide. Just as people trained in CPR and the Heimlich Maneuver help save thousands of lives each year, people trained in QPR learn how to recognize the warning signs of a suicide crisis and how to *question, persuade, and refer* someone to help. Each year thousands of Americans, like you, are saying "Yes" to saving the life of a friend, colleague, sibling, or neighbor. QPR can be learned in the Gatekeeper course in as little as one hour

BECOMING A GATEKEEPER

According to the Surgeon General's National Strategy for Suicide Prevention (2001), a gatekeeper is someone in a position to recognize a crisis and the warning signs that someone may be contemplating suicide.

Gatekeepers include parents, friends, neighbors, teachers, ministers, doctors, nurses, office supervisors, squad leaders, foremen, police officers, advisors, caseworkers, firefighters, and many others who are strategically positioned to recognize and refer someone at risk of suicide.

As a QPR-trained Gatekeeper, those present learned to:

- recognize the warning signs of suicide
- know how to offer hope
- know how to get help and save a life
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HOW IS QPR LIKE CPR?

CPR stands for cardio pulmonary resuscitation, an emergency medical intervention. It was created by Peter Safar and first described in his 1957 book, the ABC of resuscitation (A for airway, B for Breathing, C for Circulation).

QPR stands for Question, Persuade and Refer, an emergency mental health intervention for suicidal persons. It was created by Paul Quinnett and first described in 1995 in a number of presentations and publications by the QPR Institute.

CPR is part of what is called the "Chain of Survival." According to the Chain of Survival model of emergency cardiac care, the likelihood that a victim will survive a cardiac arrest increases when a series of links are connected.

With QPR, a similar Chain of Survival links are also connected. They are:

- **Early recognition of suicide warning signs.** The sooner warning signs are detected and help sought, the better the outcome of a suicide crisis..
- **Early QPR.** Asking someone about the presence of suicidal thoughts and feelings opens up a conversation that may lead to a referral for help.
- **Early intervention and referral.** Referral to local resources or calling 1-800-Suicide for evaluation and possible referral is critical, as most people thinking about suicide are suffering from an undiagnosed and/or untreated mental illness or substance abuse disorder for which excellent treatments exist. Also, the offering of hope and social and spiritual support can often avert a suicide attempt.
- **Early professional assessment and treatment.** As with any illness, early detection and treatment results in better outcomes and fewer lives lost to suicide.

One cannot overemphasize the need for early recognition of suicide warning signs. In a cardiac crisis, the difference between recognizing and acting where there is chest discomfort, before it becomes crushing chest pain, can mean the difference between life and death.

Likewise, a well-executed and positive response to the early warning signs of a pending suicide event may render subsequent links in the Chain of Survival unnecessary. Just as the prompt recognition of the scream of a smoke detector can eliminate the need to suppress a raging fire so can the early recognition of suicide warning signs. Confirming their presence and opening a supporting dialogue with a suicidal person while securing a consultation from 1-800-SUICIDE and/or or a professional may prevent the need for an emergency room visit or inpatient psychiatric hospitalization.

WARNING SIGNS OF PENDING A CRISIS

In CPR the general public is educated about the classic signs of a heart attack - pressure, fullness, squeezing and pain in the center of the chest, sweating, and other symptoms.

In QPR you are educated about the known warning signs of a suicide crisis - expressions of hopelessness, depression, giving away prized possessions, talking of suicide and securing lethal means.

SUMMARY

QPR is a simple educational program, which teaches ordinary citizens how to recognize a mental health emergency and how to get a person at risk the help they need. It is also an action plan that can result in lives saved.

Other Business / Agenda Building / Meeting Adjournment – Call for Commissioners and Consultants to report on on-going projects, etc.

On a motion made by the Chair, and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00pm.